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STEPS TO THE CHURCH.

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1. Reason compels us to believe in the existence of a Creator. To deny this, is to assert that this wonderful world, and we ourselves, with our faculties of intellect, of memory, and of will, are the results of blind chance. The law and order that we see in the Universe speak to us no less clearly of an Intelligence directing it. Even if we say that things came to be what they are by the action of some 'law'—whether it be evolution or selection, or what you will—there must have been some Intelligence which so ordered the nature of things from the beginning.

2. Conscience (or the moral sense) likewise testifies to Him; for how otherwise are we to account for our knowledge of right and wrong, good and evil, and our ideas of sympathy, charity, duty, justice, mercy? Every time we use the word "ought," we imply that there is some law, beyond and above our own desires and wills, which obliges and commands our voluntary choice. That law is what we call the Holy Will of God.

3. If the existence of a God Who cares for us be granted, it follows that He must be knowable in some way, and that it is surely our duty, as His creatures, to seek Him. If He wills our good, He cannot be supposed to have left us without the necessary knowledge of Himself and access to Him. Since we owe Him everything, we are bound to acknowledge this dependence by rendering Him love, service and devotion.

4. How are we to render Him this tribute, unless He reveal Himself in some way to us?

5. We Catholics claim that the Catholic Faith is this revelation, offering to us as it does a perfectly reasonable and sufficient knowledge of the Eternal God,

and of man's relation to Him. The Catholic Religion is also the only one that enables us to *worship* God in a way worthy of Him and pleasing to Him.

6. The Catholic Faith teaches us that God has made Himself knowable to mankind, especially by assuming the nature of man in the person of Jesus Christ, and not knowable only, but lovable and adorable also. Jesus Christ is truly the "Light of the World."

7. Catholic theologians teach that from all eternity it had been the purpose of God to become man. It is to the mystery of the Incarnation that they point as the only key to the problem of the Universe (the why and the wherefore thereof). It was the very reason for all creation.

8. Almighty God foresaw the fall of man that would ensue from the abuse of free will. In His mercy, therefore, He provided that through the Incarnation He would Himself make the atonement due to His infinite Justice for our sins, and would Himself pay the price of our Redemption. All that He demands is that we should rightly accept Him as our Saviour, and love, serve, obey and worship Him.

9. History itself testifies that Jesus Christ, Whom we believe to be true God and true Man, lived and died, preached the Gospel, and founded a Church. We believe this Church to be the custodian, and the only authoritative exponent of His Gospel; to be the means of perpetuating the good news concerning Himself to the end of time, and of conveying it to the ends of the earth.

10. He promised this Church (the One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church) the special assistance of His Holy Spirit. He declared that He would be with it always, even to the end of the world. This gift of the Holy Spirit was bestowed on the day of Pentecost. In consequence of this divine assistance, the Church is of necessity infallible, and cannot err in any decision concerning faith or morals.

11. Now as the Holy Spirit is to be with the Church till the consummation of the world, He must be with it at the present moment. Consequently those who call

themselves Christians, yet resist against the dictate of conscience the claims of the Catholic Church, resist also the Holy Spirit of God, Who guides and governs it. They are in heresy or schism. The Catholic Church acknowledges as her own, all those men and women who, desiring to please God, are living good lives and acting up to their conscience, and who are only outside the visible unity of the One Faith through invincible ignorance of the Church's authority.

12. The Catholic Church, then, we believe to be the only authorized guardian, exponent, and interpreter of the Gospel; and the ordinary channel by which the graces and help which were promised by our Lord are ministered to men.

13. It bids us offer supreme worship to God alone, and in a secondary way (but in a secondary way only) it charges us to render honour to the Blessed Virgin Mary as His Mother, and to the Saints as His chosen servants, and to seek their intercession.

14. The Catholic Church tells us that God has not only made Himself knowable, lovable, and adorable in His Incarnation, but also lovable, adorable, and *accessible* in many ways, and above all, in the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar, and that in this way He is truly Emmanuel or "God with us."

15. Jesus Christ had in view this institution of the Blessed Eucharist, this Real Presence of Himself amongst us, when in that wonderful discourse recorded in the 6th chapter of St. John's Gospel, He repeatedly invited us to communion with Him, saying: "I am the Living Bread which came down from heaven. If any man eat this Bread he shall live for ever: and the Bread that I will give is My Flesh for the life of the world" (verses 51-52); again, when He said: "Except you eat the Flesh of the Son of Man, and drink His Blood, you shall not have life in you" (verse 54); and yet again: "He that eateth My Flesh and drinketh My Blood abideth in Me and I in him" (verse 57).

The first Protestants were those of whom it is recorded that after hearing this, "many of His disciples went back and walked no more with Him" (verse 67).

Is not the question of the Jews, when they heard these words from our Lord's Divine lips, still the question of the Protestant and infidel world of to-day? "How can this Man give us His flesh to eat?"

16. This Presence of God on our altars is the reason for all the ritual (the incense, the music, the vestments, the bending of the knee), that strangers observe in our services. We offer Him the best we have, realizing all the while that nothing is good enough for Him.

17. In Holy Mass the Catholic believes there is daily renewed amongst us the great Sacrifice made on Calvary, that Jesus Christ is there at the altar both as Priest and Victim, making propitiation for the sins of the world; and that in Holy Mass is fulfilled the prophecy made by the last of the prophets (Malachi, i. 11): "From the rising of the sun to the going down, My Name is great among the Gentiles, *and in every place there is sacrifice*, and there is offered to My Name a clean oblation."

18. This was the great act of worship offered up on innumerable altars throughout this land, till in the sixteenth century the people of England were robbed of their religion by the lust and greed of Henry VIII., aided by the servility and rapacity of his courtiers, and by the malice of wicked men; and this in spite of the protest of such great Englishmen as the Blessed Martyr, Sir Thomas More, and of many other true-hearted men and women, who were faithful even unto death.

May God in His mercy help all earnest inquirers, and bring them into His Church, the Church of our Catholic forefathers, which is the one fold of the one Shepherd. So will they receive consolation in this world, and eternal happiness in the next.